

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 AID-05 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 SY-05 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05

OES-03 OMB-01 SP-02 /053 W
----- 001900

R 230550Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9469

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, BM, UN

SUBJECT: UNFDAC PROGRAM IN BURMA

REF: (A) VIENTIANE 2706; (B) RANGOON 911 NOTAL (BEING REPEATED
VIENTIANE)

1. ACTING UNDP RESREP SEMERDJIAN TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 22 HE EXPECTS UNFDAC MISSION IN LATE MAY FOR FINAL NEGOTIATIONS AND SIGNATURE OF BURMA NARCOTICS PROGRAM. WE HAVE HAD NO INDICATION OF ANY NEW BURMESE RELUCTANCE TO AGREE TO PROGRAM; DELAY IN FINALIZING AGREEMENT, WHICH BY STANDARDS OF GUB BUREAUCRATIC PROCEDURE HAS NOT BEEN INORDINATE, APPEARS TO STEM FROM PREOCCUPATION WITH OTHER PROBLEMS PERHAPS INCLUDING THE HEAVY FIGHTING AGAINST BCP WHICH TOOK PLACE IN SHAN STATE EARLIER THIS YEAR. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT UNFDAC INITIALLY WAS OVER-OPTIMISTIC IN ITS ESTIMATE OF LEAD TIME NECESSARY TO SECURE FINAL GUB APPROVAL OF PROGRAM AND BEGIN IMPLEMENTATION, ESPECIALLY SINCE PROGRAM INVOLVES SEVERAL DIFFERENT BURMESE AGENCIES. VIENTIANE MAY WISH INFORM ARNAUD OF FOREGOING AND ADVISE PATIENCE UNTIL NEXT VISIT OF UNFDAC MISSION.

2. FYI WE DISAGREE WITH ARNAUD'S ASSESSMENT OF RANA'S COMPETENCE.

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EMBASSY HAS FOUND RANA COOPERATIVE ON NARCOTICS AS WELL AS OTHER

MATTERS, AND EFFECTIVE IN MANAGING A RAPIDLY EXPANDING UNDP PROGRAM (SEE REF B). END FYI. WE SUSPECT THE COMMENT ATTRIBUTED TO EXPLAIN THAT GUB IS GENERALLY UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT EXPERT SERVICES (AS OPPOSED TO HARDWARE) AS PART OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, AND IN THE CASE OF NARCOTICS IS NOT WILLING (MAINLY FOR SECURITY REASONS) TO HAVE FOREIGN EXPERTS IN OPIUM GROWING AREAS. IF HE WAS MAKING SUCH EXPLANATION RANA MAY HAVE FAILED TO MAKE HIMSELF CLEAR, OR ARNAUD MAY HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD HIM.

3. WHILE FAVORING NARCOTICS PROGRAM IN BURMA, RANA DOES HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT SOME ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM TENTATIVELY AGREED UPON DURING VISIT LAST YEAR OF UNFDAC MISSION. HE IS SKEPTICAL, FOR INSTANCE, THAT MUCH CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN FIELD OF CROP SUBSTITUTION WITHIN THE LIMITS OF FUNDS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO UNFDAC. HE IS PROBABLY RIGHT BUT THE LIMITED UNFDAC ROLE IN THE FIELD WHICH IS ENVISAGED WILL AT LEAST SERVE TO PROVIDE SOME BASIS FOR JUDGMENT AS TO WHETHER INCREASED FUNDING WOULD BE DESIRABLE, AND LAY FOUNDATION FOR GUB COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES IN THE FIELD. WE SURMISE RANA ALSO HAS HIS OWN DOUBTS ABOUT THE COMPETENCE AND ABILITY TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH BURMESE OF SOME UNFDAC PERSONNEL.

OSBORN

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